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159 from people's gardens. Men from whose gardens she has stolen sleep
836 with her as payment for the food she has taken. Very many older men
[849] sleep with her, but young men are not brave enough."

Reasons for the lack of illegitimate children are not hard to find. If
848 Ashley-Montague's* suggestions are correct, it is quite possible that fertility is low at the period when young girls are indulging in premarital sexual activities. Further, mechanical abortions are practiced, and a
847 pregnant girl would probably attempt to avoid difficulties by a deliberate and early miscarriage. Although the society does not approve, married women, particularly older ones, make no very great secret of the fact that they avoid unwanted children by very vigorous labor or by even more deliberate attempts, like jumping repeatedly from a tree or rock or by jolting themselves in a squatting position against a stone. It is felt that these practices are most efficacious in the first two or three months, when the child is still in liquid form. Probably the accuracy of
[843] ideas on fetal development can be attributed in part to the practice of abortions.

842 There are also "medicines" that are supposed to reduce the menstrual flow, delay conception, and actually produce barrenness. In addition, women class themselves as "long conceivers" (*pol lohu*) and "short conceivers" (*pol bui*). To be a long conceiver is considered an advantage. When a young man's wife fails to conceive after a year or two, he frequently becomes suspicious of her and may accuse her of having taken a medicine to cause barrenness. "A man will then beat his wife, and if she has taken such a medicine, she has to ask some older woman for the antidote."

842 "Medicine" for any of the three purposes mentioned above seems
278 to belong more to the realm of magic than to that of effective pharmacology. Most procedures consist of eating certain leaves, like those of a sort of maidenhair fern, in a prescribed fashion over a given number of days. Another way of producing barrenness is to drink the dirty water in which one has washed a gong. This is again a reflection of the relationship, hostile in character, between sex and wealth. Men are never considered to be sterile, and birth control measures are never used by them.

842 At this point I am less concerned with establishing the possible but improbable efficacy of certain leaves and procedures in reducing menstruation and in delaying or preventing conception than I am in indicating a series of attitudes. The sum of what I have said so far seems to

* M. F. Ashley-Montague, *Coming into Being among the Australian Aborigines* (New York: Dutton, 1938), pp. 242ff.

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indicate that women are not too eager to bear children, that men are more eager for offspring than their wives. When I asked Fantan the Interpreter about this, he said, "We men are the ones who want children. Our wives don't. They just want to sleep with us. After a young man has lived with his wife for a year or two and she does not become pregnant, he is angry. He says, 'I work and work every night. I break my back, but this woman does not conceive. I had better look for another wife.'" That this was not a personal aberration of Fantan's was evidenced by confidential statements made to me by three young men who were dissatisfied at their wives' lack of fertility.

The care of infants by men and boys and their affectionate attitudes toward babies have already been mentioned. Supporting the thesis that women are often less eager for children than men, were frank statements by two older women that they had committed abortions during their first pregnancies to spite their husbands, who were buying other wives. The low level of nurturing qualities in Atimelangers is reflected in the absence of pets, with the exception of an occasional piglet, which has wealth value.

A further sociologic point that may have considerable weight is that neither men nor women are considered fully adult until they have children. Adulthood for men means financial status and a role in the prestige system, whereas for women it carries no such social premium; their life pattern is set in childhood and continues through life with only marriage as a break, and marriage per se does not confer adult status.

This subject of children and the wish for them — as well as such indications as I have that men prize them as much, if not more, than women — is far from exhausted, and there is some contradictory evidence. For instance, if women are generally reluctant to bear children, it is unlikely that questions on vital statistics put to sixteen women past the menopause would give 7.5 pregnancies per woman, and that miscarriages and abortions were only 10.5 per cent of one hundred and twenty-one recorded conceptions for these sixteen women. Here, of course, social disapproval of contraception and abortion may have acted as a deterrent.

JEALOUSY

That men are not incapable of jealousy toward their children is nicely illustrated by the episode in the autobiography of Kolmani the Seeress in which Langmai, her husband, reproaches her for neglecting her field work in favor of their child. In this connection, and in contradiction to some of the preceding data that have stressed the men's desire for children, it should be noted that there were in the community

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birth, she went to Leifui. There she gave birth to a male child with only half an ear. She already had white hair at that time. [Stop.] After that she came back here, got sick, and died. [Stop. Question.] The child might have lived, but they hung it in the brush in a basket and left it to die. [159x] [847]

[I requested anecdotes about her and Lakaseni.] When I and Lakaseni were staying in the field house with this old woman, Atamai, Atakari, another Atamai, and Likma lived there also. When she died, all her children there cried and asked, "Who knows how to take care of us, so that we may go and stay with them? Who now has a level hand?" [This means one who is skillful in caring for infants, one who can balance them well on the palm of the hand.] After that we went to stay with our various uncles, Maipada, Padalang, and Fanseni. We stayed first with one and then with another, only a few nights at a time. When we were at Puorkaivi, I did not cook for the men. They ordered me to, but I said, "I am not yet grown. Why should I cook for you?" They were all angry with me. [Stop.] We went from one uncle to another. [Stop.] At that time I had no heart; I just sat [i.e., she was still young and did not yet work]. My elder siblings were all orphans. Kolaka [the wife of her uncle Maipada] cooked for them and fed them. When Padalang went to cut a field, all the orphans followed him with baskets and cooking pots to help him with his field work. [Stop.] These children stayed with Maipada until they were big and could do field work and have thoughts. They worked in turn in each other's fields. When I too was a little bigger, I followed them with a pot and cooked for them. [Stop.] When the corn was ripe, they said, "Our younger sister is not yet big, so we shall harvest the corn and she can carry the baskets." [Corn harvesting was woman's work. Stop.] When the harvest was over, we had thirty to forty bundles of small ears and forty to sixty bundles of large ones. [Stop.] [962]

Next we cut a large field. Lakaseni went with Padalang to Raugfui. I went with Fanata to work at Padakuni. I got two large baskets of rice and Lakaseni got only one. [Stop.] Then Lakaseni said, "I shall sell my rice for a moko, and yours we shall keep for feasts." [Stop.] At this time Lakaseni was raising a pig that his Female House had given him. When they gave a death feast for our grandparents, Padalang roasted that pig and said he would pay a large moko for it. When they paid off the feast, Padalang gave Lakaseni a Kolmale moko. [Stop.] Then Maugpada said Lakaseni should give him the Kolmale and he could marry his daughter Fuipada. [Stop.] There was still a Tamamia moko